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4. This effect is already obtained by the simple repetition of the family name with which one greets a man upon meeting him. It is common to hear the Blacks greet each other by repeating their dyamu to each other several times.

its possessor's soul, ni. If, at this moment, the person flattered is in a normal state, his device causes his "soul to swell and his body to harden, inciting him to courageous action and joy." If the contrary is true, anger or emotion takes the place of contentment and calmness.

The reciter receives in return the strength of the beneficial word which, having contented the person it was addressed to, contents him also. There is an exchange of nyama: that which the reciter sends out and that which he receives in return and from which he benefits.

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That is why the recitation of the device is not always left to the individual's discretion. Because of its importance, it has become a public function generally reserved for the griot (dyeliw) who form a caste practicing endogamy and who earn their living by getting paid to recite the devices and adulations in daily life as well as during public or religious ceremonies (1). But the fact that they earn a

1. The recitation given by anyone other than the griot would be far from producing the same effect.

salary for this service affects their dignity: nobody else ever recites the devices because nobody wishes to be taken for a griot, and nobody ever marries him. The griot is at once indispensable, feared, and despised. The mechanism of forces put into motion by his action makes it possible to understand the ambivalence of feelings of which he is the object.

/78/ When the words come out of his mouth, the griot's tere is transformed into nyama, which becomes filled with a force called kuma nyamu, "nyama of words." This force goes from the head to the mouth of the speaker and reaches the person addressed. If a man is wealthy and powerful, it is said that he gets the "nyama from the mouth of those griot who flatter him." He is then forced to pay them for their encouragement. If he does not, they remain silent when

551 passing before his door and thus empty him of his nyama. The man
576 grows thin and poor. The griot may bring about his death with evil
778 words, their nyama attacking the heart, the chest, then the entire
564 body of the victim.

The griot's power over the person he flatters becomes more involved and varies according to what he is reciting. If he recites the burudyu several times, if he speaks at length of the ancestors, their nyama enters his mouth and is added to his own, thus reinforcing the power of the word. Thus, when the griot recites a barama without receiving payment, his nyama attacks the person spoken to. If this offense is repeated and if the burudyu is recited, the man is forced to pay if he does not wish to be attacked by the much more formidable nyama of the ancestors.

In these various situations, the tere of the person flattered intervenes: if it is good, it fights to defend the person, but if it is weak or wicked, it joins the ancestral forces and the person is doubly threatened.

The recitation is always made by the griot before a witness so that his action will be more binding and make the miser lose face. On the other hand, a man who pays the griot generously is looked after by the latter who sings of his generosity on all occasions and announces the sum he has received; often he does not hesitate to exaggerate the total amount received if he can hope to profit by doing so (1).

[789] 1. If the griot knows that the wealthy man he is addressing is miserly, he rubs his teeth with roots which he knows has the power to make his words even more effective.

[554] Sometimes a man reaches a secret agreement with the griot in order to gain prestige. He publicly gives him a considerable sum, part of which the griot returns the following day as agreed upon. The gift is so generous that none can surpass it.

[585 561] This practice is particularly apparent at the time of marriage. The men of the same age grade as the groom outdo each other in their gifts to the griot. The one who has given most passes for the most generous. Sometimes the griot invents a new barama on the spot even though he does not know the device.

551 The device is recited on numerous occasions. After a birth, the
576 griot proclaim it in the course of the name-giving ceremony, address-
778 ing themselves to the father, then to the newborn child /79/ who thus
564 receives it for the first time. At a marriage the barama of the two partners are alternatly recited. In everyday life, the recitation is carried on most frequently during religious ceremonies or feasts. In the hunt or at war, it has the effect of helping the participants and increasing their courage (1). In a meeting it is used to greet people

[727] 1. If the griot recites it to a war chief and the town under attack is taken, he receives part of the loot.

bearing the same name, and if one of the assistants is to be particularly honored, the first words of his device are recited.

551 In case of illness, the ally (senânku) (2) comes to the patient's
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2. See p. 119.

side and recites his barama to encourage him and help him get well. If he is dying, the recitation, which is then the equivalent of a prayer, may help his soul return. After death, the ally, the griot, and the [764] blacksmiths come near the corpse to recite his barama in order to honor him.

55 The devices pertaining to the various crafts are used when address-
576 ing the artisan with whom one has business. Thus the blacksmith to
539 whom one brings work is greeted first by his name to which is then added:

"ini fara ani goni, you are with stone and fire."

A person crossing a field will say to the farmer bent over the earth: "i ni tye i ba ka kusebe daba, greeting to him who handles the hoe well," or simply: "i ni tye daba la, greeting to him who is with the hoe." To the shoemaker one would say: "bana ani ba golo, (you are) with the acacia (3) and the goat leather."

[386] 3. This refers to the bana or baina (Acacia arabica) used by the shoemaker to make a black dye.

551 The institution of the device, with all its elaborations, has the
576 effect of confirming people in their bodies, their spiritual principles, and their social functions. Except for the cases of emigration mentioned above, the occasions are rare indeed when an individual is obliged to change his name or device during his life. A woman keeps her father's barama even after marriage.

551 An illegitimate child receives neither the name nor the device of
848 his family. They may be given him later if the father makes himself
564 known. A Bambara who contracts a misalliance, for example, by
783 marrying the daughter of a blacksmith or a griot, will bring into the world impure children who will never have a right to their father's barama (1).

1. Such a child is said to be a sofali (literally, horse donkey), that is, a bastard.

552 We must add that the prerogative of having a device is not limited
782 to humans. All animate beings, many /80/ inanimate ones, the elements of nature, places, villages, plants, animals, and all the supernatural powers have theirs which men address during prayers.

The Taboo

784 One or several eating taboos, tne or tana, are attached to the
[551] family name and are observed by all who bear the name. According to certain initiates, the taboos were decreed by Faro when he determined the food proper to each species (2) after having classified the

2. See p. 52.

beings of creation. For the common man, the origin of the taboo is always the subject of a tale or legend and justifies the bonds between an ancestor of the family and the animal or plant designated. Most frequently, the animal has helped the man, has saved his life, or the other way around; or else, following some serious events, the ancestor was transformed into an animal or plant. Numerous versions of the origins of such bonds are given.

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1. These three plants are respectively: Andropogon (Hyparrhenia) hirtus, Digitaria debilis, Cenchrus catharticus.

before the cultivation of cotton and cereals was known to them, the Bambara worked the soil with wooden sticks around the base of those grasses whose seeds they then sowed. As their stock of tools developed, they began to make the first hoes and axes. In the case of the Mandé Bambara (2) the origin of these tools is linked with the history of the

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2. The names and the origin of tools of the Bambara of the Ségou region are different.

blacksmiths, numu, who form a kind of caste in this part of Africa as in many others. They practice endogamy, maintain joking relationships, senankuya, with other Blacks, and are in charge of certain cults dedicated to ancestors and to Faro (3).

3. On the myth of the divine origin of blacksmiths, see S. de Ganay, "Notes sur la théodicée bambara." See also infra, p. 53 n. 1

Before the discovery of metal, ancestors of the present blacksmiths worked with wood, then stone. From then on they bore the name of numu, a term which today is reserved exclusively for the artisans of iron, jirifa numu or farafa numu, according to whether they worked with wood or stone (4).

4. L. Desplagnes mentions the historical aspect of the origin and role of the Sudanese blacksmiths (Le Plateau central nigérien /The Central Nigerian Plateau/, p. 110).

The peoples issued from the intermixture of the ou, shepherds (Getules), with the ar, sedentary tribes (Fari), have already been pointed out in earliest antiquity by writers, historians, and geographers who called them Numidians. Salluste tells us that "The Faronsũ, in mixing with the

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getules (gne-Toules), formed the nation of Numidians.

But according to tradition, these half-breed Numidians, today called Noumous, were the first initiators among primitive peoples of the industrial arts; thereafter the title of Noumous was kept and applied to all blacksmiths."

And in the footnote on the same page: "But in Nigerian countries, this term for blacksmith, Noumou, does not necessarily contain the notion of a metallurgist."

/114/ All blacksmiths said to be of "pure blood," that is to say those who belong to the three families of Fané, Koumaré, and Balo, are descended from the Gwonna, who came from the underground village of Gwondougou and to whom goes the glory of having discovered iron.

According to informants, the word Gwonna comes from gwã̃, a name usually given to the hearth of the forge, which designates precisely the place from which the ore is extracted and where it is treated. The high furnace is called gwã̃ so. The gwã̃ tuku munu, extracting blacksmith, is the only one able to perform important rites. The word Fané derives from fã̃, which designates the forge in its entirety. Koumaré comes from kuma, word. It is the Koumaré who are charged [537] with the responsibility of debating in council meetings or in public gatherings. The word Balo recalls the fact that the bearers came to settle in former days on the shores of the Niger, ba.

The Gwonna are senãnku of the other blacksmiths. Moreover, in the villages where they live together with other artisans, they are by right the chiefs of the Komo and guardians of the sanctuaries where the ancestral tools are kept. Only if they fail in their obligation will the blacksmiths belonging to other families assume these duties.

The titles of the Gwonna are linked to the mythical origin of the forge which is under the domination of the Téliko spirits, masters of the air and wind, hence of the bellows and fire.

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They inherited them from the eight ancestors who, before the appearance of death, were transformed into bee eaters (tatugu kononi) by the balanza and who received the power to activate or to extinguish fire (1).

1. See p. 43.

The Téliko spirits, jealous of the independence of these new beings, resolved to subdue them and waged war on them. The birds, who had no weapons, bewailed and a Gwonna blacksmith took pity on them; he requested axes, hoes, and arrows from the men of his family and gave them to the birds, receiving in return the promise of revelations which would be useful to him. Having made this arrangement, the birds, armed with weapons, went to meet Téliko at the place called gonya. They used their weapons in a gigantic conflict in which neither adversary could vanquish the other.

/115/ The birds then returned to earth and thanked the blacksmiths by teaching them three secrets necessary to the good progress of their work:

1. How to build their altars by mixing in a panther skin cold water, iron, and a stone, soul of the forge.
2. How to protect from the fire the hands of women potters.
3. How to make and consecrate the circumcision knife.

Since these revelations, the Gwonna venerate these teachers, thus raising the number of their ancestors to sixteen: the first eight transformed into birds who had not the use of speech, and the eight others who received the word from Faro.

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In each village the patriarch of the Gwonna holds the title of kotigi (literally, owner of things). He guarantees the custody of the ancestral tools deposited in a sanctuary and of the ritual objects which belong to the blacksmiths of the village, and which are kept in his home. In addition, he is the only one who may perform the rituals concerning these tools and the purifications.

The important position of the Gwonna family is translated into ritual. Whereas an ordinary blacksmith, after breaking a taboo, must request the intervention of the kotigi to purify himself, a Gwonna simply asks the members of his own family.

564 Every blacksmith is regarded as the holder of an excellent tere.
326 He is well-intentioned, affable, and never hurts anyone. It is easy
774 to make friends with him, to joke with him, even if one knows him
but a short time. The senankuya relationships which he has with other
Blacks also contribute to the cordiality of these ties.

[304] The good tere of the blacksmith is brought into play particularly at circumcision which is preferably entrusted to a Gwonna. Being circumcised by a blacksmith causes the wanzo to diminish rapidly, hastens the healing, and improves the tere. A blacksmith is reputed to have the power of transforming himself at will into an animal or a plant. In those places where hyenas are venerated as the animal
[825] protectors of a village (dasiri), they are always considered as the blacksmith's ancestors who have undergone metamorphosis. (1).

1. Particularly in the village of Konodimi, situated 21 km. to the southwest of Ségou.

773 The ritual paraphernalia now preserved in each village comprise
564 models of all the tools manufactured by the blacksmiths since their
326 first appearance.
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a. Wooden tools The craftsmen first used wood, gradually changing the shape of the objects. From a simple stick /116/ (generally in sunzun) (2) or from a rough-hewn block, they gradually made more

2. Diospyros mespiliformis. The wood of this tree is very hard.

perfect tools, obtaining the shape desired by rubbing and polishing on rocks.

773 The first weapon used in hunting was a throwing instrument in the
564 shape of a boar-spear, the semenkala (from kala, handle, Fig. 9, A).
326 Hewn from one piece, it comprised three distinct parts: (1) the
411 bulonda; (2) the semenu; and (3) the koli (literally, hook). Men threw the object with all their strength at the pursued animal or else they dug into the earth where their prey was hiding with the pointed end (semena) which was often poisoned with a viper's venom. The weapon was the object of blood sacrifices carried out on the koli and destined to increase its strength.

773 The first agricultural tool was the yirewolo (literally, noble, Fig.
564 9, B), thus named because of its antiquity, mogokoroba (literally, old
326 person, ancestor).
41[illegible] b. Stone tools Later, craftsmen learned to use stone. They used
[172] neolithic axes called "thunder stones" (1) which were used as scissors.

1. The Bambara, like other Blacks of the Sudan, attributed divine origin to certain neolithic axes (see p. 71. It would seem that a great many primitive tools had been found by them in the area at the time of their arrival.

Those of the Gwondougou were at all times famous for their solidity. The craftsmen worked together and when they had rough-hewn their models, certain individuals among them were delegated to sharpen these by rubbing them on a rock.

The farakun (literally, stone head) (Fig. 9, D) was the first axe the handle of which was invented by an artisan who, having poisoned the sharp edge of his tool, wished to try it out on a tree. He sank the stone into a young tree trunk with the idea that the leaves would dry up of themselves. But he died without having ascertained the result. Later a passerby, having tried in vain to remove the stone from the tree, cut the wood above and below it, and in handling this new tool, was surprised at its efficiency. The use of the hafted axe spread among men who utilized the fiber of the nyama to tie the stone to the wood. In addition, the stone could be separated quickly from the handle and used as a knife to cut meat or bones. The handle was used as a pointed stick with which to dig in the ground and to attack animals.

It is probable that hafting was also applied to wooden hoes made in two sections and used /117/ for a long time in areas where there was no hard stone. In fact, a myth concerning the discovery of the cultivation of cotton, which preceded that of cereal grains, mentions the fact that men used to take their handles home, but left the ends of their hoes at the crossroads each day in honor of the local spirit.

c. Iron tools Finally, the Gwonna discovered iron and developed the science of metallurgy (2).

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2. The Blacks consider that the discovery of iron and metallurgy are due to the Gwonna. It is, however, not impossible that this technology was imported by craftsmen who came from the Mediterranean.

At a time when the men had left the village of Gwondougou, taking their altars with them, two girls left their home and went to live with two artisans of the Fané and Koumaré families.

[532]

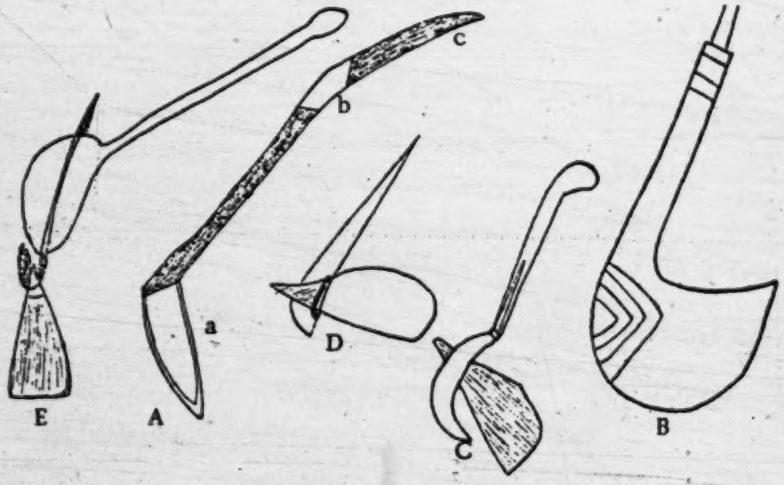

Fig. 9 —Weapons and tools of wood (A and B), of stone (C and D), of iron (E) of the ancient Bambara. (Drawing by an informant).

When the men returned to the village to get some hard stone which they would like to use, they were very much troubled not to find their girls. They dug the ground to search for them, thinking that they had been buried, since men in those days lived in laid-out underground holes. In the course of this work they discovered some rocks which were hitherto unknown to them and which are called farabele. The men thought these rocks beautiful and wished to use them. When placed in fire they were changed and became so hard /118/ that the hammers with which the men attempted to shape them split. The pieces of iron were then used as projectiles to replace the stones of the slings. But the blacksmiths, who had abducted the young girls and who had returned to the village with their wives, saw the new substance and suggested the idea of making axes out of it.

773 564 326 412 The first forged tool, the kongobwona (literally, to abandon hunger), is still used by blacksmiths today as a ritual axe (Fig. 9, E).

It is made up of a wooden handle terminating in an enlargement which forms its bulk, and pierced by a bent iron rod which in turn holds the cutting edge (farabye) of the axe proper. The handle is very long, allowing the man to work without bending over.

The tool justifies its name for it brought prosperity to the craftsmen. The symbolism of the different sections shows this: the enlarged part of the consecrated model, which each blacksmith keeps on his altar and which is the object of regular rituals, is hollowed out and holds money, millet, and copper. The iron rod which pierces it represents at its lower extremity the tongue of the oldest of the Gwonna, and at its upper extremity that of the youngest, thus recalling the actions and the words of those who discovered the metal for the benefit of all.

Later, blacksmiths manufactured other models of iron axes and hoes, copying those previously used, but reducing their size.

Each day the end piece of the wooden hoes was abandoned at the crossroads after they had been used in honor of the local spirit. The worker kept only the handle and carved a new tool for the following day. The handles of hoes and axes were considered to be people because they were impregnated with the vital force of those who held them. The farmer left the cutting edge (of stone or iron) in his field and brought home the handle which he placed on his mat at night.

[782] Weapons and tools were the objects of regular sacrifices. The handle was removed and the blood of victims would flow first into the hole used to secure it, then on the cutting edge, while the officiating person recited a prayer.

773 564 326 412 778 Today, the assemblages of ancient tools are called makorobaw ka minew (literally, tools of the great ancestor). Considered as the most respectable and precious /119/ testimony of their civilization, models of each object are kept in sanctuaries called makoroba so (literally, house of the ancestors) which are generally natural caves or holes dug in the ground, reminiscent of primitive habitations. These tools are identified with the ancestors who used them and who were, long before the organization of religious societies, the object of a regular cult. That is why, in deference to this fundamental hierarchy, they are presented to the circumcised in front of the family altars (1) at the time of the initiation of the Komo. Similarly, they

1. Particularly in the village of Konodimini in the Ségou region.

773 564 326 412 778 are removed from the sanctuaries, honored, and replaced before the Komo altars during the agricultural and funerary rituals; to fail to observe this rule would constitute the breaking of a taboo and entail the most serious disorders.

In the course of the annual ceremony consecrating the dead, these tools are carried to the cemetery and receive as many victims as do the dead, for they represent the ancestors.

The kotigi brings them to the same place on two other occasions: during the agricultural ceremonies carried on after the growth of the ear of corn and after threshing the harvest. Axes and hoes are presented one by one at the tombs of the dead and then, reunited in the center of the cemetery, each of them is used once to cut a branch or to dig the soil. This ritual gesture recalls the use which the ancestors made of them.

The Forge

326 826 The blacksmith establishes his workshop under a shed, usually located in one of the squares or at the entrance to the village. It is the simplest of its kind and involves a minimum of equipment. The forge represents the craftsman: the furnace his body, the bellows his testicles, the blast pipe his penis, the fire his head. When the red hot metal is beaten with the hammer, a replica of the gosilande, which symbolizes the universe, the sparks are the lightning and thunder bolts.

326 778 The altar of the forge, sometimes situated to the west of the hearth, contains blackened hoe, pickaxe and axe handles, coal (fininkoro, literally, old coal) ashes kneaded with clay (buguri, literally, ashes of the hearth), all of which belonged to former owners, and finally an axe kongobwona called "mother of the altar," a smaller replica of the ancestral axes.

The bulk of the wood which holds the iron hooks and the blade /120/ is hollowed out and forms a kind of storage divided into three compartments.

The upper one contains money so that whatever happens, the blacksmith will have means to live.

In the central compartment are placed copper and iron, metals which the blacksmith works, as well as water, basic element and preferred seat of Faro, master of the word.

794 the Komo's blessings, the Komo's blessing is with him; let him join
852 the men, let his light be with us" (1). The child is then presented in

1. De dyira la tyę gundo la; ani komo ye
dukaw mine nuofe, komo ka barka bi a fe;
ka fara tyew ka, ka yele kę an ta ye.

the same way to its grandmother.

These acts anticipate the initiation which later will make the new-
794 born an adolescent member of the Komo society.

794 In each village this society is composed of all initiated men, di-
561 vided into age grades, which are themselves composed, theoretically,
of the men circumcised in the same year. Only the griot are not
[564] admitted. It is permissible for an individual who has not been initiated
immediately after his circumcision to be admitted later if the society
agrees. He will belong, regardless of his age, to the age grade with
which he will have been initiated.

One age grade has precedence over the other which follows. This hierarchical order is followed strictly in daily life as well as during councils and ceremonies. To break these rules of seniority would mean to disturb the order even in the hereafter, since the Komo gathers together the sum total of both living and dead members.

794 The recruitment of members varies from one region to another
because of the expenses involved in the admission ceremony and in
[735] participation in the ritual. Some villagers refrain from joining be-
cause of poverty, and it also happens that some conversions to Islam
are brought about by this fact.

/155/ The initiation is performed at night. The kotigi (2) presents

2. See p. 156.

to the future members, one by one, the ancestors' tools. He explains to them their origin, their history, their role, and their spiritual value. He teaches them the respect they owe the ancestors for their courage, their labors, and the technological inventions of which they were either initiators or guardians. The mask is removed from its shelter and dressed by a member; in front of the children the man who wears it unmasks himself and reveals to them the meaning of the different parts of the costume.

[103]

History of the Empire of Kaarta

The Descendants of Nya Ngolo

*173 Sounsan (1). When Sounsan and his people had crossed

[551] [845]

1. As we shall see, the given name marks some event connected with the person's birth. It is common practice, when the delivery is difficult, to hang a rabbit's foot at the mother's side, hence the name Sounsan ("rabbit" in Bambara). The name Péné, used elsewhere, has the same etymology.

*173 564

Sounsan is said to have practiced the saddle-maker's trade at Kounando. It is told how one day he went with a kulé (a native carpenter) into the country to get some wood needed for a saddle. At one point the two became separated. The kulé found some honey and ate it, only to be taken sick. He threw up the honey on some stones and then went away. Soon after, Sounsan passed the spot and, seeing the honey, picked it up and ate it. When, on his way back, he learned how the honey happened to be there, he was so disgusted and cursed the kulé so roundly that, since that time, none of his people can touch a kulé with impunity. All members of that caste are thus tne (taboo) for that branch of the Kouloubali.

*173 the Niger with the help of the poyon', they proceeded in the direction of Lamballaré (2). There, at the village of Darigo, Sounsan

[103]

2. In the Soninké language, this is the name of the region watered by a swamp

60 the household, they are ba-u (mothers), and the title ba is commonly used out of deference or respect. Very old women are addressed as mama, "grandmother" or "ancestress." [163]

564 Members of castes. These are free men who are destitute and form a kind of clientage of important families. We shall discuss them later on.

567 Slaves. Only slaves entrusted with special duties lived in the house. When a master discerned qualities in a new slave that might make him useful in the house, he kept him in his own service and often treated him well and generously. Custom gave the children of such a slave a privileged position; since they were "born in the house" (wolo-so-u, they could not be sold except in the case of extreme necessity. All confidential servants were recruited from the wolo-so-u, and the eldest, most experienced, and most favored often acquired great influence in family affairs. They knew more about the secrets and resources of the community than most of its members.

Another category of slaves is made up of those who after three generations were ipso facto freed (dyongoron'-u). They have played an important role in native society.

2. The Patriarchal Community or Patriarchy

769 The ancestral spirit-god. In order to view a custom from its most expressive aspect, it is necessary to observe it in its fullest development and, at the same time, to note anything adventitious or foreign that modifies its appearance and procedure or alters its basis.

The cult of the ancestors is the very essence of the family, and the most characteristic manifestation of this cult is the funeral ceremonies for the head of a family, the patriarch (fa). Here, one is present at the transformation of a man into an ancestral spirit-god within the span of 40 days.

This period is an interval during which a link between the past and the future is formed in the present, whereby

584 Thus, the fa of the two communities manage the entire transaction. Does this mean that the young people have no way of influencing the decision of the "elders"? No, because here, as elsewhere, all sorts of intrigue affect the decision of the fa. He must take account of the views of those around him; he is aware of their feelings, and he is just as likely to subordinate his interests to affection as to hatred. He is perfectly well aware, as is his entourage, that although he can impose his will, even though arbitrary, while he lives, all he has achieved may collapse at his death if his work was ill supported.

In short, the rigidity of the principles which put the "young" at the mercy of the "elders" is, in fact, more often [182] than not relaxed in favor of the young people's desires. The solidarity between members of the community makes them give heed to the opinions of others; it is this need to minimize differences of opinion that makes any family affair drag on endlessly. Discussions, agreements, and reciprocal gifts characterize the [197] bargaining and compromise which are so great a part of the transactions. From this it is apparent what an essential role is played by the numerous intermediaries who are called in to prevent clashes and to mitigate friction, but too often turn to exploiting community difficulties.

In any event, these discussions serve to publicize these transactions just as we achieve the same end through legal means.

The request and agreements. The request is made by an [564] intermediary. In Kaarta this is a man of caste, usually a dyeli (griot), accompanied by a free man. Elsewhere, notably at Ségou, he is sometimes a middle-aged man, known for his experience in such matters, who in this role is called furu-bolo-ma-tigi, "marriage director."

The furu-bolo-ma-tigi goes to the house of the fa of the girl, states his mission, and if he is favorably received, offers him some kola nuts which he has brought with him. He returns home with a promise that the request will be considered.

The fa does in fact consult his entourage and especially his ancestors and gods. The furu-bolo-ma-tigi returns with offerings to be used in questioning the ancestors and gods; if the reply

553 851 [562] Women are not admitted to the men's circle. Gathered near the mother's hut, they know that a name has been given, but do not know what it is. The woman who tied the cord then washes the baby three times in warm, soapy water and, taking water into her mouth, sprinkles the tiny body from neck to lower back three times. She then expresses her good wishes. Carrying the child, she goes to the door of the hut, where the father and family heads are waiting, and asks the name. Then she returns to the women and places the child on the lap of an old woman who blows into the baby's ears three times and then shouts in each ear: "Kuyo! Kuyo! i tua dara, "that is, "Kuyo! Kuyo! [854] your name is ...." The child is then wrapped in the narrow swaddling band which the mother will henceforth use to carry him on her back, and if it is a boy, the baby is rolled three times over the blade of an ax, or if a girl, over an iron implement for picking cotton. While this is going on, everyone is expressing best wishes.

[184] In Kaarta the ceremony is somewhat different. A beef or a sheep killed in front of the mother's hut, and dege [Ed., coarsely ground millet in water] is also prepared. The baby's head is shaved, and the hair is placed on the dege. Each guest [564] puts his right hand on the edge of the gourd and a griot expresses good wishes for the newborn child. Then the guests dance around the dish of dege; the hair is removed from it and given to the mother to keep. [213] Then if the occasion warrants it, the [304] three lines of tattooing peculiar to the Kouloubali are made on the baby's face with a dagger. Finally the griot takes the child, carries it around the crowd, and returns it to the father, who must then make known the chosen name. When the father has pronounced the name, the griot again takes the child and, making a trumpet of his hands, cries out to him three times: "your name is...."

551 In principle, the name (tua) recalls some circumstance surrounding the birth. A posthumous child is usually given his father's name, as though he were the reincarnation of the father, or more commonly, he is called Fa-n-ko, "posthumous" (literally, "the one who came after the fa"). If the baby shows some resemblance to a deceased person, he is named for the person or,

428 2. If there are no children, the collateral males and,
596 lacking them, ~~the~~ wives.
614 3. If there are no collateral relatives, the ascendants.
4. If there are no ascendants, the surviving spouse.
5. If there is no surviving spouse, escheat occurs: [220] the inheritance reverts to the head of the settlement, the dugutigi, when this settlement is independent; otherwise to the head of the clan, the fama.

596 The community and the individual. The result of the
614 foregoing is that the individual, whoever he may be and whatever his situation, has no value except as a member of a community (1); it is the community that exists and has an identity,

[567] 1. A slave has no rights because, as a person, he belongs to no community.

while the individual exists and is identified only through the community and for the community.

An individual who exists apart from any faya is, therefore, an anomaly, and this situation comes to an end as soon as the individual himself becomes fa.

596 There are cases, however, when an individual is put out
614 of his community because of his own action or because of circumstances, and extraordinary changes of status result.
626 Anyone driven from his community for bad conduct loses his rights to the faya in that community.

564 If his disqualification results from the practice of a trade
558 regarded as degrading, he falls into what the Bambara call nyama-ka-la and Europeans call "people of caste." Henceforth he is not only excluded from his community, but he lives apart from all persons not declassed; he is a free man of inferior standing. He usually lives under the protection of a community of persons not declassed, earning his living from it and deriving from it such consideration as may be sometimes given him.

564 Among the Bambara, the nyama-ka-la include: the
463 numu, blacksmiths, whose wives are usually potters; the loro, who work with copper; the garanke, who work leather; and the kule, who work with wood and are sometimes saddlers.

564 The hunters (donso), who form powerful and feared asso-
463 ciations, and the somono [Somono] and bozo [Bozo], who are fishermen, have a less restricted status than the above-mentioned artisans.

The dyeli who has fallen to the level of a domestic factotum is the most scorned of all. He receives some consideration and, in exceptional cases, notable esteem only through his worth as family archivist.

564 The term nyama-ka-la is derived from nyama [221] meaning "ordure" or "outcast," and these people are outcasts. They are scorned. Some are particularly feared: the black-
754 smiths and the dyeli. The former are reputed, not without cause, to be given to the practice of magic and even sorcery. The dyeli have a fancy for poisoning.

Since persons of caste are free, they may contract marriage, that is, a lawful union, and found families just as free, non-caste persons do. Their male children naturally inherit the father's status which, thus, is handed down indefinitely through the male line.

Ordinarily they intermarry within the caste although sometimes a member of one caste may marry a member of another.

558 Any non-caste individual who marries a member of a
564 caste automatically loses status. A woman who does so is henceforth considered to be a person of caste, and her children necessarily have the status of their father. A man is less seriously affected, and it is not at all rare for a man of standing to have a wife of caste. This is indubitably a misalliance; children of such a union are not highly regarded, and this reflects on the father.

564 On the other hand, it is entirely normal and common to have persons of caste among one's friends. There is hardly a person of consequence who does not have several of them as boon companions.

Although the fact of belonging to a caste carries with it a definite status, the caste member is not necessarily expected to practice the traditional trade. A member of the nnmu caste may very well know nothing whatever about ironwork and may

564 engage only in agriculture. Furthermore, casual or temporary practice, in one's own home, for instance, of one of the reputedly menial trades is not considered degrading.

567 596 614 Theoretically, enslavement does not exclude an individual from his own community nor in any way demean him in relation to it (1); if he returns, he recovers his rights just as

1. For example, Déssé-Koro, taken in captivity to Ségou, returned to Kaarta where he exercised the faya of the Massa-si.

though he had never been away.

On the other hand, at the place where he is a slave, an individual belongs to no community (as a person), and that is why he has no rights and is treated as a chattel.

567 We have shown earlier how, aided by time and circumstances, a slave may manage to escape some of the limitations of his status, but strictly speaking, [222] he can never escape this status. If in fact, as the chronicle says of Ngolo Dyara, a slave succeeds in attaining a position whose importance would seem to obliterate the stigma of servitude, the blemish of slavery nevertheless remains indelible.

4. Relations between Communities

596 614 621 The true social unit is the community. Even when no special organization links them, communities are often linked by numerous bonds. This involves no distinction by race, incidentally, since more often than not ethnically diverse peoples live together in the same region.

These bonds between communities may be classified under two heads: kinship and alliance.

Kinship

[602] The influence of kinship is very extensive. Thus, a single patriarchal community includes the familial communities

*173 we have just noted, would have formed an unbreakable bloc
614 if both elements had not been affected by the ferment of dissociation referred to in the course of this study.

[487] The to-da derived the larger portion of its prosperity from the Niger. Communication and transport could most easily be maintained along this artery, and it was the need to make the greatest possible use of the river that brought about the organization of the Somono.

[101] Etymologically, the word Somono simply means "fisherman." Like any trade practiced exclusively, professional fishing involves a certain loss of standing, and that is why the [564] Somono are said to be people of caste. This status is especially due to the supremacy of the clan over the Somono, without whom it could not have exploited the river.

64 After using force to annex them, Mamari added to their
564 number by assigning some of the furu-ba dyon' to the group, so
*173 that the Somono were soon closely dependent on the furu-ba. At the orders of the fama and his agents, they were required to [505] maintain ferry service across the river, to provide river transport in both directions, and to pay a fee in kind on their catch, with the understanding that they could continue to live according to the traditional Somono customs.

In return, the Somono were under the protection of the clan and their leaders benefitted from the generosity of the fama. They would occasionally be given a share of booty. [324]

Little by little, the few original Somono families were lost in the flood of newcomers. These included: the furu-ba dyon' who had become Somono on orders from the fama; people of diverse origins who had adopted Somono status of their own accord because they found it better than their own; and finally, the children of both, who were Somono by birth.

[233] It was likewise the exploitation of the property of the to-da that brought about a similar organization of the shepherds, or Peul. Let us first note that this term has no ethnic significance; it designates all who raise or watch over animals as a regular and professional occupation. Here, too, there is a kind of loss of standing, since a working shepherd could hardly do without a sponsor and must attach himself to a master. This is the case for

614 all who exercise a calling, and that is why the Bambara call a
564 Peul "fula fantan' (weak Peul)" (1), to indicate that he is in
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1. See in Chapter 7 below [not translated] how this expression is used as an insult in the quarrel between Ma-n-son and Bacari Dyan.

potestate.

In order to ensure the greatest return from the clan's flocks, Mamari had recourse to the Peul, just as when he wanted to exploit the Niger, he had taken over the Somono. That is how Peul settlements came to be established, called furu-ba fla-u, "Peul of the furu-ba." These are free people, but they are required to serve the clan. The ranks of these first Peul were increased by the arbitrary assignment of some of the furu-ba dyon'; some pastoralists by choice joined them; and the children of both groups were furu-ba fla-a by birth. This went on until there were enough of them for Ngolo Dyara to set up twelve Peul encampments. Mamari divided them into two tribes: the Dyana (people of Dyan), and the Bonguéna (people of Bongué). The furu-
[563] ba fla-u speak Bambara, and very few of them can claim to be Peul in ethnic origin.

In the case of the Somono and the Peul, we have seen how the clan exploits the populace, for any people on which the clan forces its authority is treated in the same way. The clan requires a contribution, according to the means of livelihood from each of the population groups it assimilates. The system used for the fishermen and the shepherds was likewise used for the agriculturalists. [325]

In this case, too, the furu-ba dyon' were blended with the rural peoples. Although they were relegated to special villages, this isolation never prevented them from maintaining close relations with the people in the surrounding areas.

Here again, there were agriculturalists by adoption. Through time heredity consolidated the close union between these people of the agricultural caste and the clan.

463 554 [324] The numu: blacksmiths, whose wives are generally potters. The smiths are the masters of fire, those who cook the sacred earth in order to extract the minerals or to fix the form of pottery.

The loro: coppersmiths.

The garanka: leatherworkers.

The kule: woodworkers, and sometimes saddlemakers.

The donso: hunters, who form powerful and feared associations.

The somono, or fishermen, who have a status a little less restricted than that of the artisans mentioned above.

The dyeli or griot, domestic factotums of a kind, who, although the most disdained of all these, are nevertheless the family archivists.

[563] One may add two Peul shepherd tribes, identified by Manson: the Dyanna and the Bouguena (1).

1. See Monteil, Les Bambara du Ségou et du Kaarta [The Bambara of Ségou and Kaarta].

463 564 All of these artisans are endogamous and fixed in caste, father to son. However, the fact that a man belongs to a caste does not obligate him to exercise the caste trade.

326 463 608 The most powerful guild is incontestably that of the blacksmiths. From their ranks are recruited all the priests, the Fama's interpreters, the well-diggers, the grave-diggers, the executioners, the circumcisers, etc. They are the sénanku of all the families and are in charge of all the purification rites.

554 The griot are equally feared, because of the power of their words and because they spread afar the renown of the chiefs.

564 The free man who marries a woman of caste marries beneath himself, and his children are looked down on.

[324] [727] The purest blacksmith families are those of the Fané Balo; the purest griot those of the Koniaté. People of caste always remain at liberty; when they are captured during a war, they make themselves known and keep their status.

463 326 [64] These different guilds are sufficient to maintain in the Bambara country a certain industry of a distinctly artisan and non-specialized type. Thus, the smiths work iron, copper, and wood to

that period; his body will not be buried but will be carried off by members of the Komo, who will take it to a crossroads and crush it with the aid of komo-se-w [sic]. The remains will be hidden in a secret place. The same treatment is accorded to the komo-tigi who dies during his seven-year term.

The cult is cantonal, and the various komo-tigi take their orders from their colleagues of the capital. The cult formerly was interican and intertribal. Labouret (Les Mandingues et leur langue [The Mandingo and Their Language]) has made a table of the seven categories of persons who make up the hierarchical society of the initiates.

After initiation into the Komo cult, a natural sequel to circumcision, the young man may, if he so desires, be initiated into other cults. He then enters a powerful spiritual family which unites all its members by ties of brotherhood. This brotherhood is superimposed on the normal social hierarchy of the flã-tõ [this term is probably the same as flanton]. The chief of the brotherhood is entitled nyama-tigi; he is generally a man of caste or a slave. He acquires his position as chief either by inheriting it, by election, or by founding a new cult. To do this latter, he must buy an altar, gna, from the village or from the brotherhood that already possesses this cult. Such a purchase is considered a marriage with the gna and is accompanied by drinking. The higher-ranking initiates (dyenfaw: masters of the truth) are auxiliaries of the nyama-tigi and participate in the oracle, wara-da. All the initiates are more or less divine. The clergy includes, in addition, a sacrificer, muru-kala-tigi, and a dyeli, herald of the god. To become one of the faithful, one must pay an entrance fee and swear an oath of secrecy, obedience, and fellowship. The clergy manages the cult's treasury which is fed by the entrance fees to the brotherhood, by fees levied for a class promotion, by contributions required for the major ceremonies, and by fines imposed on the members.

The brotherhood is a spiritual family which is organized in a fashion similar to the natural filiation of the community. The nyama-tigi plays the role of the fa; the dyen-fa-w and the notable members form a sort of council for settling, with the chief, all questions. The cult does nothing on Mondays and Thursdays, the work holidays.

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773 tools and the throwing weapon were made. Then, unfired pottery and weaving were invented; and men finally came to know stone tools, iron and the forge. The technique of making dwellings seems to have developed more slowly.

a. Fishing

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564 Side by side with populations who specialize in the art of fishing, such as the Bozo or the Somono caste, all the Bambara fish in the [96] rivers or watercourses in the neighborhood of their dwellings. A detailed study has been made by J. Daget (1). The Somono, who

1. Jacques Daget, "La pêche dans le delta central du Niger" [Fishing in the Central Delta of the Niger], Journal de la Société des Africanistes, Vol. XIX (1949), No. 1.

are the caste of Bambara fishermen, use traps and nets for fishing; the Bozo remain faithful rather to harpoons and small nets. They are
BA Bo the ones who almost always make the pirogues, for they alone may enter in rapport with the spirit of the water, Faro. The nets are of
286 227 knotted mesh made with a weaver's shuttle, sia, and a cylindrical mold, pako. The band of the net, as it is being made, is nearly always attached to a wooden bridge especially conceived for this purpose, the kale or dio soyo kala, a regular tetrahedron whose edges
BA Bo are about 20 centimeters long, one of which is prolonged by a handle 1.50 meters long. The fisherman, seated on the ground, puts the
283 824 bridge before him, keeping the handle close to his leg. The fibers used in netmaking are da (Hibiscus cannabinus), kie (Figna unguiculata), cotton, and now European thread.

Bo
226 The Bozo construct weirs from cut and joined tree branches; the weirs assume several different forms according to the regions and
Bo BA the snares used. Fish are used for human consumption; they are eaten fresh, grilled, fried or boiled, or preserved by smoking or drying. Oil,
251 252 used for cooking and as a lubricant, is extracted from certain fish, such as the tineni.

BA Fishing in Bambara villages is done communally under the
226 direction of a fishing chief at the time the waters recede. Precise rules of fishing rights and of rents due the masters of the waters are respected everywhere.

bolitigi, the latter have every interest in protecting them, for not only do they pay /38/ their masters annual dues of 80 to 160 cowrie shells, which is little, but they also provide the meats and kola nuts for sacrifices and the d'lo, or beer, for the nocturnal drinking bouts and orgies, and thus are a real godsend.

3. Metamorphosis

The Negroes say that a djiné or a boli genie can pass from one body into another. Today it may paddle in a pond, be enclosed in a tree, or sit on a rock; tomorrow, if it wishes, it will make its dwelling in a cow's tail, in a horn, in a dirty rag. Whatever its dwelling may be, it is never confined. The Negroes compare these spirits to the wind, to a breath which enters and penetrates into a space through the smallest crack and fills it. Yet they have bodies and are equipped with organs; they drink, eat, and procreate and differ from man only in their tenuity. Since the Negroes are convinced that certain people have become able to master and command the spirits, could they not come to believe that it was possible to attain, like them, a rarefied state? In any case, they do believe in metamorphosis, and it is by entering into an animal or plant, or changing himself into an animal, a plant, etc., that the wicked person succeeds most often in avenging himself, in appeasing his hatred, and even in doing evil for the mere pleasure of doing it.

A good number of sorcerers have this privilege, and sorcerers are not the only ones! Entire castes have the power of metamorphosis; among others the Koulé, who dig out canoes and mend cracked gourds, can all change themselves into hyenas. The sons of the Siri, who are members of the sect dedicated to the boli of this name and are called souba (1) because they commit their crimes during the night, change

1. The name souba is derived from sou ("night") and ba ("great"), ma ("man"), being implied. It means "a man of the great night," "men

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who operate in the depth of night," but by no means refers to nocturnal sorcerers. Moreover, in the eyes of the Negroes it designates not a bugaboo, but a reality.

themselves into hyenas in order to dig up corpses and eat them, and into gingin ("owl," "screech owl") to drink the blood of sleeping men and women. It is said that the blood of young girls has an especially exquisite taste, /39/ and when the souba are unable to enter a dwelling in material form to obtain it, they change themselves into such a rarefied breath that they go through the walls and roofs.

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All persons whose faces are disfigured with scars resulting from boils or canker sores are considered victims of a souba, as are those whose legs are rotted by syphilis; every person infected by erysipelas goes to the members of the Siri sect, the souba.

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In addition to the souba there are the gné-fla (1), men with

1, They are supposed to have the ability to make themselves invisible by means of grisgris hung on their belts. Deprived of these, they are powerless.

two eyes, with second sight, so called because they see the world of invisible beings and know the secret thoughts of men without having to undergo metamorphosis. Some of them are good and some evil; there are those who use their prerogatives to halt the blows of the souba and protect their fellows, and others who use them only to harm their neighbors. As the good as well as the evil can abuse their power, the Negroes keep them all together, and since the souba are almost always gné-fla as well, they are indiscriminately feared and hated.

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When a person is metamorphosed into something else he keeps his intelligence and his reason, but he is dominated by an instinct, either good or evil, which destroys his will and anesthetizes him.

584 1. The Marriage Proposal (1)

1. The procedures described here apply to the marriage of a young girl. For widows or divorcées who remarry, there are consultations of diviners, sacrifices to the evil fetishes, etc., but the betrothal and wedding ceremonies are performed with a minimum of show.

837 581 The Bambara are not unmoved by the beauty of a woman's form; they can distinguish a well-formed body from a malformed one, a pretty woman from an ugly one, and they find a coppery skin more attractive than one of ebony black. Similarly, a face pitted by smallpox or a bosom covered with scars displeases them, and a man talks to you about his fiancée or his wife, he is quite proud to be able to say: "sien si t'a la, she has a body without blemish," therefore she is beautiful. When it comes to marriage, however, he does not look too closely! He readily keeps silent about his tastes and seldom consults his heart, for a wife to him is primarily a source of pleasure and profit. /200/

581 What he sees in a woman above all is a being of a different sex than he, and if she is industrious, cooks well, and is good at business, he will know how to close his eyes to her defects in order to keep her and allow her to be an important person in his home who must be reckoned with.

584 When a Negro who wants a wife finds an unbetrothed girl, he quickly confides his secret, his fears and hopes, to his close friend, a man of mature age who enjoys some respect in the country (1). The

544 1. Some people have thought that the "storytellers /griots/" act as intermediaries in asking the hand of a child. Nothing is more

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erroneous, for the Bambara despises this breed and would never entrust one with such a delicate mission. The Bambara dreads the storyteller in his private festivals. How many times they say as they invite us: "We came ourselves to invite you so that the news may not reach the ears of the storytellers." The to-n-tigi, head of the association of the fla-n-to, plays no important role in the marriage of a to-n-dé, or member. The to-n-déou, members of the association of the fla-n-to, are invited and enjoy themselves at the wedding of a fellow te-n-de, and that is all. Mr. Barbier Louis /sic/ makes a mistake; see page 527, Dec. 16, 1907, of the review La Quinzaine.

584 latter receives four kola nuts wrapped in green leaves and tied again and again so that they will not wither, and, spear in hand and his inseparable goatskin, or foroko, well fastened to his shoulder, he starts on his way, proud to be assigned such a pleasant mission and happy and pleased to be the fourouboloma tigi, guardian of the wedding gifts (2).

2. Fourouboloma, "engagement gift"; tigi, "master."

584 887 576 At the end of his journey, on the public square, he extends a very friendly greeting to the old men who there devote themselves to laziness in the shade of a great tree with the apathy of lizards; he gives them all generously of the snuff that every stranger must offer, and if he has no friend or acquaintance in the village, he chooses from among them a man of good will who will introduce him to the family and smooth the way for him. When this man is found, he goes